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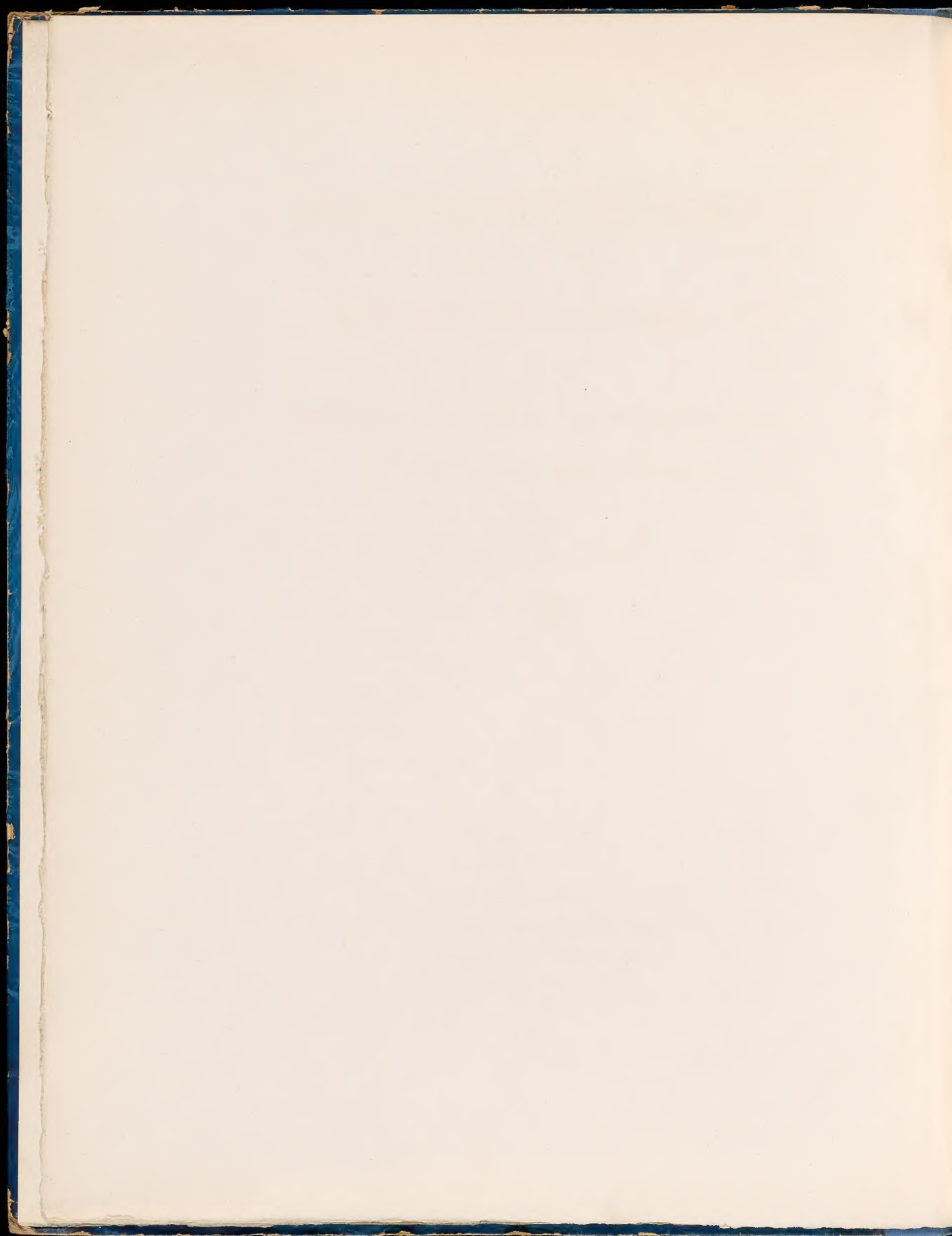
The Garden of Paradise Rug  
*and* The Holy Carpet  
of the Mosque at Ardebil

REPRODUCED WITH VARIATIONS IN SILK











The Garden of Paradise Rug  
*and*  
The Holy Carpet of the Mosque at Ardebil  
*Reproduced with variations in silk*

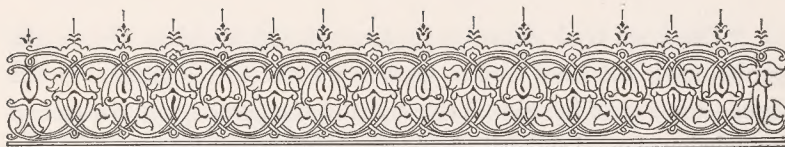
By  
ARTHUR URBANE DILLEY



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## The Garden of Paradise Rug

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*"The pleasure derived by the collector of works of art depends to a great extent upon a knowledge of the history of that which he possesses."*

**N**ATURE is the master architect, draftsman, builder, sculptor and weaver. She fashions for the habitation and delight of man valleys sheltered by mountains, garnished by rivers, variegated by forests, nurtured by sun, and canopied by sky. Nature is also the master decorator. Man, observing that nature is beauty, forever endeavors to envelop himself in nature similitudes. Like the bee that stores summer's honey against the adversity of winter, man stores summer's sunshine, her flowers, fruits and birds in every manner of household art.

Beyond compare, Asia is the continent of mighty nature. As nowhere else, mountains, plains and deserts have titanic proportions. Primitive man, whether tiller of the soil or shepherd of flocks, lived close to the great mother, studied her unremittingly, and bequeathed to his son insight, imagination, and power of imitation.

Of all the arts which the Oriental has copied from nature, none has afforded him delight comparable to that which he has derived from the garden. The Occidental knows the garden to be his own, because he plants and tends it. The Oriental, far wiser, attributes the garden to God, and recognizes man only as its humble attendant.

"The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden. Out of the garden made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight—the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden. And the Lord God took man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress and to keep it."

The Mohammedan paradise is a garden, as everyone has been told, but few Christians have read the passage of the Koran that describes it. "And when the heaven shall be rent in sunder, and shall become red as a rose, and shall melt like ointment, the wicked shall be taken by the forelocks and feet, and cast into hell. They shall pass to and fro between the same and hot boiling water. But for him who dreadeth the tribunal of his Lord are prepared two gardens, planted with shade trees. In each of them shall be two fountains flowing. In each shall there be of every fruit two kinds. They shall repose on couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk interwoven with gold; and the fruit of the two gardens shall be near at hand together. Therein shall receive them beautiful damsels, having complexions like rubies and pearls. Besides these there shall be two other gardens of dark green. In each shall be two fountains pouring forth plenty of water. In each shall be fruits, and palm trees, and pomegranates. Therein shall be agreeable and beauteous damsels having fine black eyes, who shall be kept in pavilions from the public view. Therein shall they delight themselves, lying on green cushions and beautiful carpets. Blessed be the name of the Lord, possessed of glory and honor."

The beautiful carpets of Persia are the children of the gardens of Persia. Some Persian rugs depict incidents of historic conquest, resplendent scenes of palaces and courts, exhilarating hunts of kings, and stories of love. But the vast number of Persian rugs depict the flowers of the garden.

Of flower rugs there are two groups. Just as in literature there are realistic writers and romantic writers, so among the rug weavers of Persia



there are Realists and Romanticists. The realists depict the garden, its flowers, fountains, and vases as nearly as possible as these glories are observed. The romanticists create a fantasy of flowers, leaves, vines, seeds and fruits, which bear only remote resemblance to the sources of inspiration. Together, these groups contribute the finalities of beauty to Oriental rug decoration. The rug which this writing is to chronicle is the happiest possible blending of the two.

It is a delightful coincidence that the first Oriental rug recorded in history, so far as the records go, is a garden rug. Its story is told in a monograph by Dr. Karabacek, Director of the Imperial Library of Vienna.

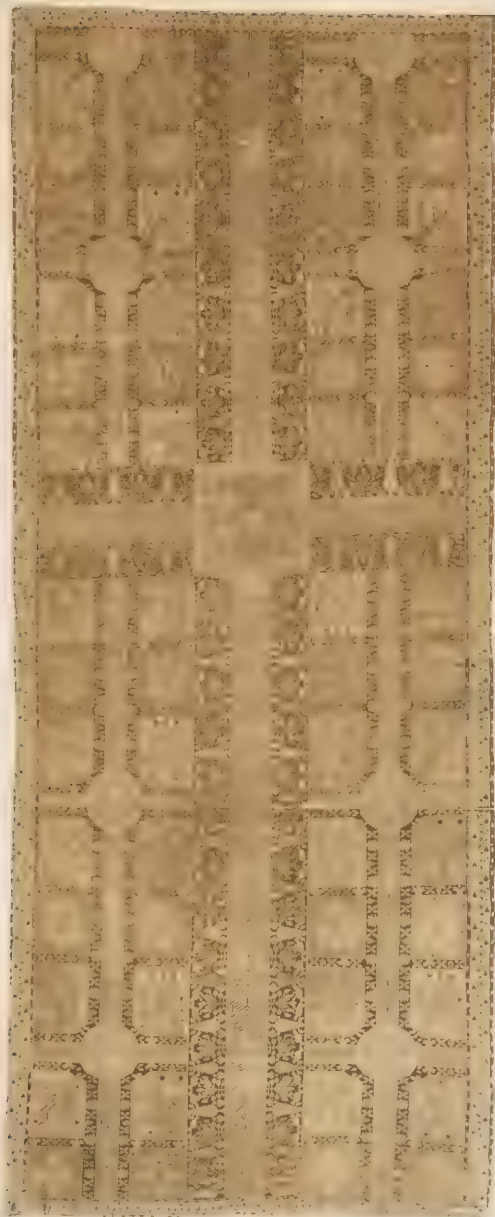
"When Ctesiphon, the residence of the Sassanids, rulers of Persia, fell into the hands of the Arabs in the year 637 A.D., they found in the royal palace a colossal carpet of 1,051 square meters, which was originally made for Chosroes I. His successor, Anaschar, used it also, but only during the stormy weather, when remaining in the gardens was impracticable. The festivities were then transferred to the palace, where a garden with the beauty of springtime was represented by the pattern of the carpet. This was the Winter Carpet that was called in Persia the Spring of Chosroes. Its material, which was marvelous and costly, consisted of silk, gold, silver, and precious stones. On it was represented a beautiful pleasure ground with brooks and interlacing paths, with trees and flowers of springtime. On the wide borders surrounding it were represented flower-beds in which precious stones colored blue, red, yellow, white, and green denoted the beauty of the flowers. Gold imitated the yellow-colored soil and defined the borders of the brooks, where the water was represented by crystals. Gravel paths were indicated by stones of the size of pearls. The stalks of trees were of gold and silver, the leaves and flowers of silk, the fruits of many-colored stones."

The shell of the marvelous palace of which this rug was the chief ornament still exists. The central arch is 85 feet high, 72 feet wide and 115 feet deep. So huge an entrance plainly indicates an audience-

*Garden of  
Paradise*







*Palace  
Garden*

chamber that would easily accommodate a rug of 1,051 square meters, or 11,236 square feet, which corresponds to an area 150 by 75 feet. It is specifically recorded that a rug twice this size was the rare possession of Hisham, Caliph of Egypt, who died 743 A.D. A modern historian says that "carpets, sometimes over 400 feet in one piece, woven of wool and silk, embroidered with pearls and other gems, covered the vast floors." How such rugs were woven is not explained.

The value of \$750,000, which was attributed by the appraisers to Chosroes' garden carpet, was probably not excessive. Persia's war banner, called the "leathern standard of Kaweh," which was also captured, was found when cut to pieces to contain gems worth \$150,000. The soldier who captured it, not realizing its true value, sold it for thirty thousand dirhems or \$5,400. The great rug, many times more valuable than the banner, became common property and as such was distributed piece by piece among the thousands of soldiers. Each soldier's share of the entire loot, after one-fifth had been assigned to the Caliph Omar, was approximately \$2,000.

Deep-rooted belief is the firmest basis of value. Garden rugs are esteemed especially valuable because they transcribe the object that is believed to be the most beautiful in nature. Additionally the ancient conviction of Mohammedans that the superlative enchantments of gardens are but intimations of the paradise beyond, attaches to old garden carpets a value beyond price and a rarity beyond comprehension. At most, a half dozen garden rugs enrich the museums of Europe, and only recently was a single specimen secured for the Metropolitan Museum.

A Persian garden has been described as a square or oblong plot, enclosed by high mud walls over the top of which appears a dense bouquet of trees. Within, the garden is no less alluring. Formal and dignified, the shaded plot is divided into four equal beds by a raised cross-shaped path. Within the beds grow flowers in profusion, each bed a different kind. Water is carried through miniature trenches from the



town watercourse. Such is the small garden that constitutes the courtyard of nearly every city house.

A great Persian garden is pretentious. On a large level site have been constructed two intersecting axial avenues, one slightly more important, higher and broader than the other to accommodate the canal. The avenues are bordered by stately trees, "lofty pyramidal cypress, tapering plane trees, tough elm, straight ash, knotty pine, fragrant masticks, kingly oaks, sweet myrtles, and useful maples." At the intersection of the avenues is either a shallow pool, lined with blue tile, or a pavilion, square or cruciform in shape, surmounted by a dome. In the latter type, four L-shaped pools moat-like surround the pavilion.

Again a Persian garden may be located on an acclivity with a background of mountains. In this case the pavilion or casino stands upon the highest eminence. Below, a series of terraces, down which a stream of water falls, terminate at a pool of considerable area. Water, however, is never abundant. All pools are shallow, all channels miniature, all land thirsty.

Obviously the Persian garden is a composite of garden, orchard and park. No earthly spot, says the poet, exceeds in beauty the cool, silent gardens of Ispahan. No plats surpass them in name. One of the grand gardens is called "Heart's Ease," another the "Displayer of the World." The Shah's garden is "The Garden of the Throne." The immortal Sadi's great poems are "Gulistan," meaning the rose garden, and "Bostan," or the fruit garden. The garden ode by Hafiz is renowned:

Call for wine and scatter roses: what dost thou seek from Time?

Thus spake the rose at dawn: O nightingale what sayest thou?

Take the cushion to the garden that thou mayest hold the lip and kiss the cheek of  
the beloved and the cup-bearer, and drink wine and smell the rose.

Proudly move thy graceful form and to the garden go, that the cypress may learn  
from thy stature how to win hearts.

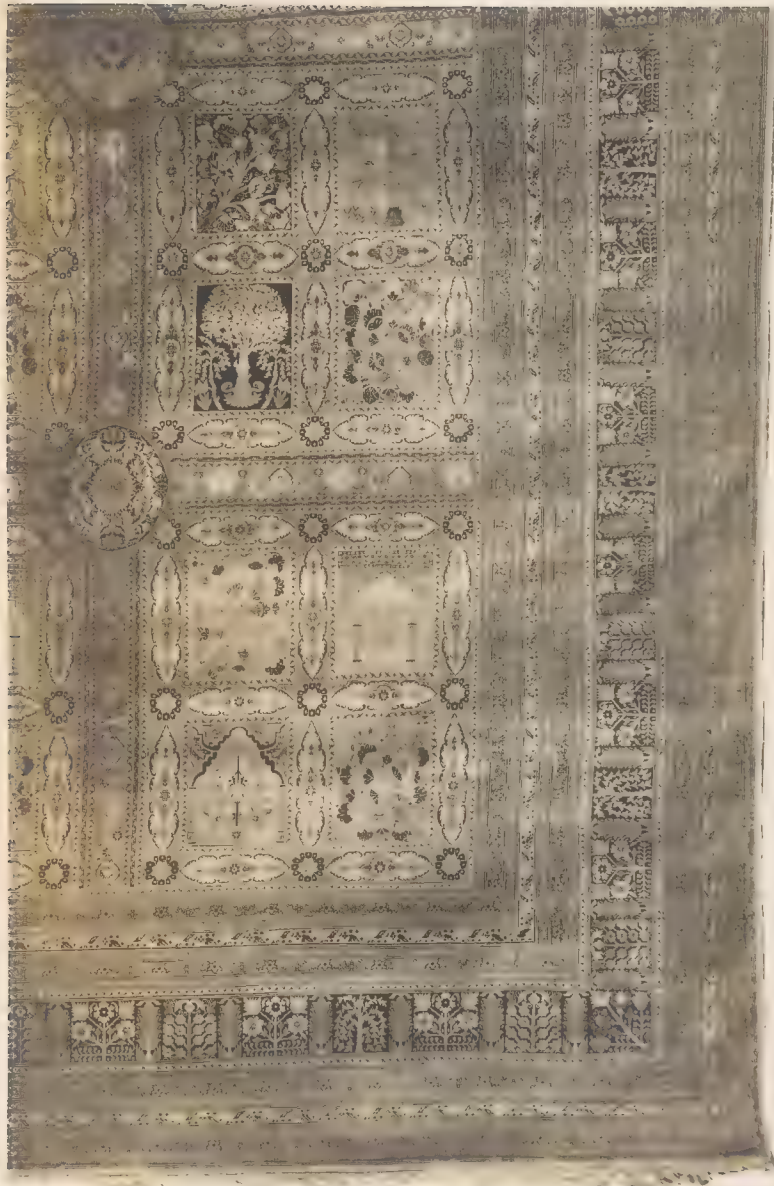
To-day while thy market is full of the tumult of buyers, gain and put by a store out  
of the capital of goodness.

Every bird brings a melody to the garden of the King—the nightingale songs of  
love, and Hafiz, prayers for blessing.

*Upper Detail of  
Paradise Rug*







*Lower Detail of  
Paradise Rug*

The flowers of the garden, to the surprise of most Occidentals, are the domesticated flowers of Europe and America, many of which grow profusely in a wild state. The favorite is the narcissus, which grows everywhere. In small houses and large it is seen in huge bouquets. Often the Persians ornament it with small rings of colored paper, cloth or velvet, inserted between the first and second rows of petals.

The roses of Persia are the china and moss varieties, from which the rose water is secured; yellow and orange single roses; and noisette and nestorange roses, the latter a delicately scented single rose whose tree grows to a great size.

The other common garden flowers are the zinnia, whose plant grows five feet high, aster, balsam, wallflower, chrysanthemum, marigold, convolvulus, marvel-of-Peru, portulaca, cockscomb, dahlia, Mary's flower, larkspur, sweet William, pink, tulip, white and purple iris. Nowhere are these flowers more sincerely loved.

Lilacs and grape vines are planted freely in the garden. In shady corners are to be found small patches of mint, aniseed, fennel and parsley. Sometimes at intervals gourds and melons add their glories of form and color. Backgrounds and edging are made of broom-plant.

The fruit trees of the garden are apricot, date, fig, olive, orange, quince and pomegranate. The shade trees are cypress, willow, poplar, the semi-sacred plane tree, alder, ash, beech, elm, juniper, maple, oak and walnut.

The garden represented by the rug which is the occasion of this monograph, is a very elaborate garden. The ordinary garden has but four plots separated by two intersecting paths. This garden consists of eight ordinary gardens, four deep and two wide. It has thirty-two plots and fifty-two paths. Seemingly it is a palace garden.

The visitor who wished to acquaint himself with its larger aspects would first traverse the central avenue, whose three circular pools supply the garden's life. The path itself he would find decorated with hyacinths,



carnations, and roses; the border with figured tile. Beyond the tile he would note the ribbon canals that water the garden. The pools he would find overflowing and densely covered with plants. Water and tile are realistically depicted.

The planting of the two upper gardens, right and left of the central avenue, he would find identical. In the upper plot to the left is a riotous growth of peony, to the right narcissus. In the lower plot to the right is more peony, to the left carnations.

The second pair of gardens from the top he would also find identical. In the upper plot to the left is peony again, to the right a "tree of life." Below to the left is more peony, and to the right a plot laid out in the pattern of the mihrab or prayer niche, every detail of which is executed in flowers.

Descending to the third pair of gardens, he would find them again identical and superbly beautiful. Surpassing the peony plots in interest, a pear tree heavily laden with fruit contends for admiration with a tree "pleasant to the sight," beneath which willows and iris thrive.

Entering the last pair of gardens, each containing two prayer plots, he would find them alike as the others. Paradise, said Mohammed, consists of "two gardens planted with shade trees, in each two fountains flowing," and beyond them "two gardens of deep green, in each two fountains flowing forth plenty of water." Paradise is not, therefore, a single, but a double heaven. Evidently this garden is the Garden of Paradise.

Paradise naturally has a marvelous setting. Its border, as here portrayed, is a revelation. Nothing on earth approaches its thirty-five walks, flower and walk borders, and rows of flowers. The principal promenade is shaded by cypress and willow, alternated with two profusely flowering plants, one of which resembles forget-me-not. Figured tiles define the avenue. Beyond on either side extend row after row of flowers, which bees attend, and in their hives the nectar of the garden store.

The material of the rug is the finest quality of silk. This was obtained from the long domesticated silkworm which produces a white or cream-colored thread. "Wild" silk has numerous colors, due to the many varieties of food on which wild worms feed. This finest material was obtained furthermore by the most careful selection of cocoons, only the most perfect specimens of which were used. It was obtained also by the elimination of all waste or floss. Careful comparison of the material of this rug with that of other silk rugs will afford a lesson in silk qualities.

The superiority of silk over all other textile fibres is not sufficiently appreciated. Silk fibre in its raw state is for its size the strongest fibre in existence. It is said to be as strong as wire of equal diameter. Although something of this strength is lost in spinning, the fibre remains very strong, elastic and durable. Furthermore, silk absorbs dye far better than other textile fibres. In consequence, it can be given tints of color that never can be given to wool, linen, and cotton. Herein lies one of the many superiorities of this masterly rug. So numerous are its colors and delicate shades of color that no satisfactory enumeration of them can be made.

Silk is the de luxe material of Persian gift rugs. During the sixteenth century there were woven at the Persian court, by direction of the reigning Shahs, particularly Shah Abbas, many marvelous silk rugs, mostly of small dimension, for use as gifts to European monarchs. This custom of weaving silk rugs for gift purposes was thoroughly established, and never wholly died out. The costly fineness of the material and workmanship of this Garden of Paradise Rug leads inevitably to the conclusion that the rug was created to express the utmost of love and regard that the human heart can entertain. Whether this supposition is true or false, this rug duplicates the essential material of the famous rug of the "Noblest of the Gods, the King and Master of the Whole Earth, the Son of the great Ahura Mazda, Chosroes of Persia."

## DATA

PLACE OF WEAVING—Northwestern Persia.

SIZE—19 feet by 11 feet 10 inches.

MATERIAL—Silk, natural and dyed.

WARP—Two-ply white silk on two levels, forty to the inch.

WEFT—Two shoots of white silk after each row of knots.

KNOTS—Ghiordes: 20 to the inch horizontal.

24 to the inch vertical.

280 to the square inch.

TOTAL NUMBER OF KNOTS—15,540,249.

COMPARISON PERSIAN GARDEN CARPET, WAGNER COLLECTION,  
VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM:

240 knots to the square inch.

Total number, 8,524,569.

COLORS—Red: Italian, claret, mulberry, pink.

Blue: dark, light, peacock.

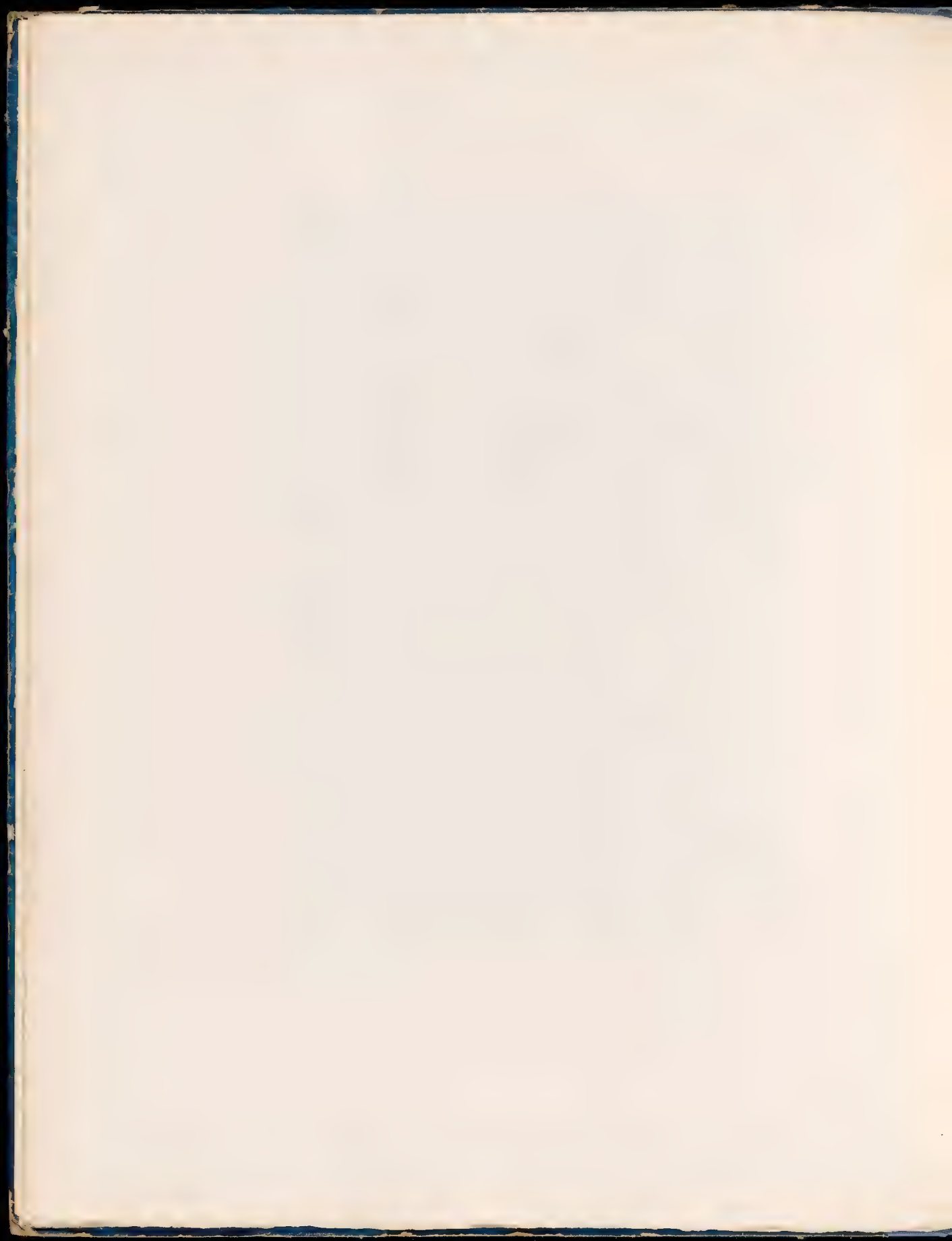
Yellow, orange.

Brown, tan.

Green.

Ivory and black.

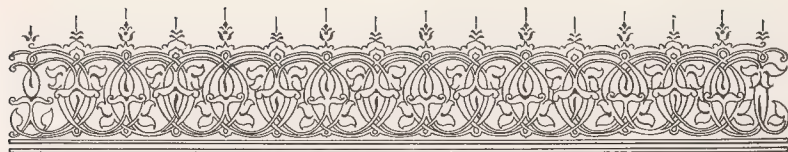




The Holy Carpet of the Mosque  
at Ardebil reproduced with  
variations in silk







## The Holy Carpet of the Mosque at Ardebil reproduced with variations in silk

*Whatever object is the ultimate creation of any art is forever the chief model, ideal and inspiration of the creators of that art.*

“IN a Persian compound,” writes a scribe, “there was being woven at the time of my visit, a copy of the renowned mosque carpet of Ardebil, now among the treasures of the South Kensington Museum. This famous original is without a peer in the world—a masterpiece of color in the most intricate of old Persian designs.” The story herewith to be told is the story of the foremost masterpiece of Oriental rug weaving and of one of its reincarnations; the story of a great artist and of a brilliant disciple, long separated in point of time; and the story of the third great period of Persian history.

Over the long span of 1,262 years that extended between the overthrow of the Persian monarchy of the Sassanids in the year 637, and the recovery of the control of the government of Persia by the Persians in 1499, Persia was ruled by a succession of Saracen, Tartar, and Turkish tyrants who completely obliterated Persian renown and seemingly finished Persia’s career.

With the bankruptcy of Persia’s government went also the bankruptcy of Persia’s religion. For more than a thousand years, from the period of Cyrus, the founder of Persia, to the year 637, the faith of Zoroaster had been the national religion of the Persian people. Never

was it to be so again. The old faithful were dispersed and banished. But out of the rift that the new religion suffered, attributable to the great Mohammed himself, came Persia's new independence and subsequent glory.

At an early period the followers of Mohammed became divided on the question of the succession to the leadership, or as it is called, the caliphship. The majority believed that the true succession lay with the descendants of the Caliph Moawiyeh, a lineal descendant of one of the prophets' greatest opponents. Others held that the succession lay with the sons of Ali and Fatimeh, respectively the adopted son and daughter of the prophet, with Hasan and Husein and their descendants. In a desperate conflict between these two groups, which occurred on the banks of the Euphrates, nearly all of the male descendants of the prophet were slain. Thereupon, almost the entire Mohammedan peoples from India to Spain became Sunnee or Omayyad apostles, adherents of the right of might, rather than of the right of blood.

Fortunately there was an exception to the uniformity of belief. Without other reason than fanatical obstinacy in religious and mystical speculation, the Persians maintained the claims of the house of Ali and Fatimeh, and considered pilgrimages to the tombs of Mohammed's immediate family as no less meritorious than pilgrimages to Mecca. Naturally, the Persians venerated the twelve Holy Imams, who were direct descendants of Mahommed, and far famed for wisdom and sanctity. The Seventh Imam, Musa, left a lineal descendant in the person of a priest named Sheikh Saifus, who resided at Ardebil in the fourteenth century; and this priest, in turn, a descendant by name Ismael.

At the age of eighteen Ismael, by force of genius, raised a small army and captured the city of Baku, just north of his home town. His success made recruits, and at the head of sixteen thousand soldiers he seized Tabriz. Immediately, in the year 1499, he was proclaimed Shah of Persia, the destined founder of the Safavid dynasty. Since that period,

except for brief subjection to the Afghans, Persia has been independent and at times a powerful nation.

Ismael died in 1524, leaving the record of a glorious reign. His successors were Tamasp, Ismael II, Mohammed Khudabenda and Shah Abbas the Great, who reigned to 1628. After Shah Abbas the line degenerated. The third great period of Persian rule and the one great period of extant Persian rugs, is the period that began with Ismael and ended with Shah Abbas.

In the year 1540, or forty-eight years after Columbus discovered America, the greatest master of rug weaving concluded the creation of two rugs for the mosque at Ardebil, where had just lived and reigned the great Ismael. These rugs, companion pieces, were each thirty-four and one-half feet long, seventeen and one-half feet wide, and approximately thirty-three million knots fine, three hundred and forty knots to the square inch. They were woven of wool tied on warp and weft of silk.

About thirty-five years ago one of the two was secured by Vincent Robinson & Co. of London from the very Mosque of Sheikh Sefi where it had lain for three hundred and fifty years. Subsequently, the second rug was obtained and used in part to recreate the first. Thereupon the first rug, completely restored, was exhibited and almost immediately bought for the Victoria and Albert Museum by public subscription, started by Mr. William Morris. The remains of the second rug, pieced out with foreign borders, subsequently became the chief treasure of the rug collection made by Mr. Charles T. Yerkes.

The ground of the Great Mosque Carpet of Ardebil is "blue, covered with a floral tracery of exquisite delicacy and freedom of treatment. A central medallion of pale yellow terminates on its outer edge in sixteen minaret-shaped points from which spring sixteen cartouches: four green, four red, and eight light cream; and from two of these again, as it were suspended and hanging in the direction of the respective ends of the carpet, are two of the sacred lamps of the mosque."



*Ardebil  
Carpet*





*Reincarnation of  
the Ardebil Carpet  
in Silk*

"Quarter sections of the central medallion, also on a pale yellow ground relieved by tracery, form the angles. A broad border completes the glorious design—a border of alternate elongated and rounded cartouches filled with floral and other tracery. The former is on a base of red; the latter on a rich brown ground. Flanked on the inner side is a broad band of cream seven inches wide, relieved by a variation of a so-called cloud pattern. A narrow band of crimson fringes the body of the carpet; and on the outer side is a single broad band, also seven inches wide, of tawny hue, shading from dark to light, relieved by a bold design in blue.

"But however exquisite the tracery, however delicate the coloring, the greatest interest centers in a panel adjoining the border of the upper end, bearing the following inscription:

I have no refuge in the world other than thy threshold;

My head has no protection other than thy porchway;

The work of the slave of the holy place, Maksoud of Kashan, in the year nine hundred forty-two.

"Here is revealed the age of the carpet, which not only determines the character of workmanship of a particular period, but affords a standard for determining by comparison the relative age of other pieces. The year 942 corresponds with our year 1539 A.D., and the position of the date indicates that it was inscribed a little before the completion of the fabric. Accordingly, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the carpet was begun during the closing years of the reign of Ismael, who died at Ardebil in 1524, and finished during the reign of Tamasp I.

"To infer that at this period were many such carpets would be a mistake. This rug was doubtless woven by the order of the court, and by one of the most skilled artisans, who may have made it the crowning labor of his life. It indicates the highest technique acquired in the early part of the Safavid dynasty."

Comparison of this masterpiece of rug weaving and its copy show the following results: The two center ornaments are almost identical. In



both a sixteen minaret-pointed medallion, contrived of arabesques, is surrounded by sixteen satellites of ogee form. In both the medallions are set within flower-strewn fields. In both the wide border stripes are decorated by elongated panels separated by octofoils. In all the essentials that constitute the greatness of the original, the copy is faithful. The variations pertain to details. The mosque lamps, which are the only realistic features of the original, are conventionalized to accord with the general decorative scheme. The corner areas are modified by the inclusion of the satellitic medallions within the embellishments. The elongated panels of the main stripe are increased from twenty-four to twenty-eight. The secondary borders are doubled in number.

It is continuously remarked that Shakespeare borrowed or stole all of the plots of his predecessors. This is true. It is also true that he so completely adapted them to his purposes that he created a literature wholly new and masterly. The comparison herein suggested concerning the relationship of the Ardebil rug and the magnificent rug which bears so close a resemblance to it, is not unwarranted. The weavers of the copy also created a wholly new thing. In place of a blue rug they created a rose one. By using the Ardebil colors in a wholly new way, they themselves became artists and creators.

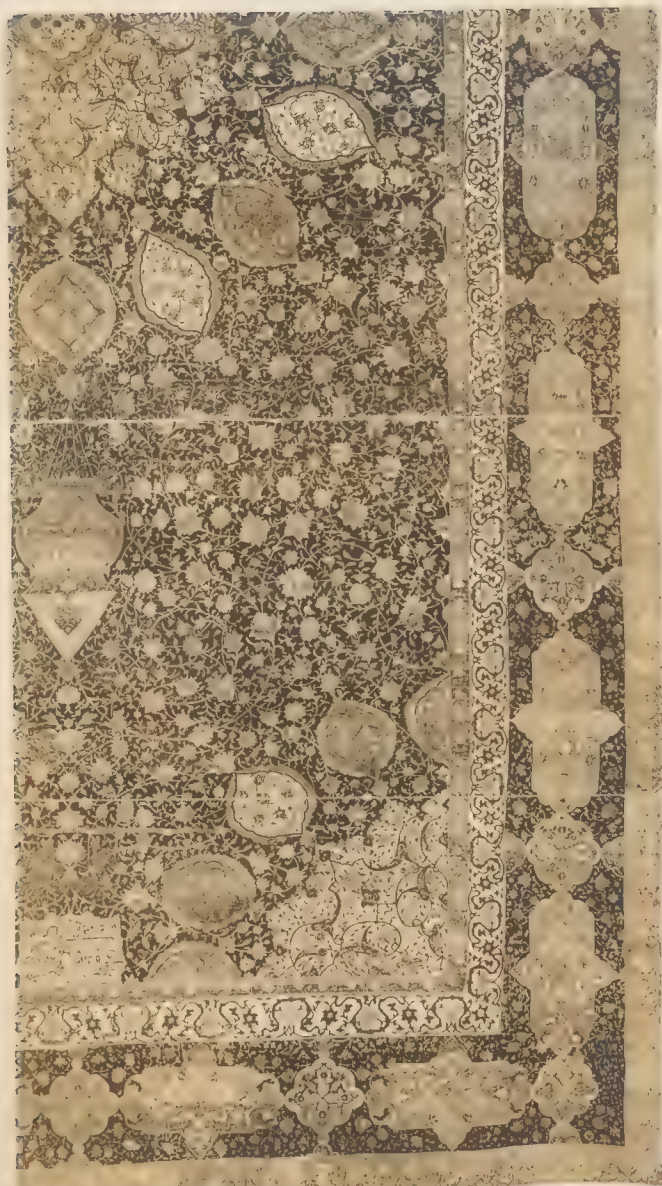
They wove the ground a red that approaches Italian. They made the center medallion a marvelous cinnamon brown. They composed the satellite medallions of ivory and many shades of blue. They created the corner arabesques a tarnished silver on black; the flowers gold, orange and tan. The main border stripe they wove the red shade of the field, the elongated cartouches blue, the octofoils tan. The inner stripes they made silver and gold; the outer stripes blue, gold, red and silver.

Nor were the weavers content to use for this new creation any but the finest material and most precise workmanship. In place of a wool surface on a silk base, as in the Ardebil rug, they must employ all silk. Instead of three hundred and forty knots to the square inch of the

*Detail of  
Silk Carpet*







*Detail of  
Ardebil Carpet*



Ardebil, they must employ three hundred and ninety-six. Instead of the ten colors of the original, they must employ twelve.

Silk is the material held in highest repute by the Asiatic. It was discovered centuries before Christ by the Chinese, who honored one of the early Empresses by calling her the Goddess of Silk Worms. From China, much against the will and edict of the Government, knowledge of the processes of silk manufacture was carried into Japan and India. In the course of time, silk culture was practised from the Pacific to the Mediterranean. In Persia, during the grand period, silk was employed for every manner of textile art.

Silk is not the fugitive material that most Occidentals, accustomed to dilutions, think it to be. It is the strongest of all textile fibres. Additionally, it has this acknowledged superiority over wool: that it can be dyed in uncomputable shades which wool, cotton and linen cannot be made to express. Herein is one of the superiorities of this fine rug.

During the sixteenth century, the Great Abbas, conscious of fine personal attainment, a truly marvelous court, and the prestige of his state, made a practice of employing the best weavers of his realm to create rugs expressive of personal and national grandeur. The silk rug masterpieces so produced, embossed with gold and silver thread, he gave from time to time as gifts to friends, and particularly to European monarchs. Rugs designed especially for foreign monarchs customarily contained the coat-of-arms of their prospective owners. Such rugs were long called *Polonaise*, because insignia of Polish royalty created the mistaken belief that the rugs were woven in Poland.

The custom of making silk rugs for gifts, once thoroughly established by a great monarch, was never wholly discontinued. Silk rugs are preeminently gift rugs. That the magnificent rug which derived its inspiration from the Ardebil Carpet is one of the most brilliant examples of silk weaving, and a most covetable gift, is attested by all who have seen it.

#### DATA

PLACE OF WEAVING—Northwestern Persia.

SIZE—20 feet 2 inches by 12 feet 10 inches.

MATERIAL—Silk, natural and dyed.

WARP—Three-ply white silk on two levels, thirty-six to the inch.

WEFT—Pink silk, two shoots after each row.

KNOTS—Ghiordes: 18 to the inch horizontal.

22 to the inch vertical.

396 to the square inch.

TOTAL KNOTS—14,754,960.

COMPARISON—The Great Mosque Carpet of Ardebil

340 knots to the square inch.

COLORS—Twelve.

Red: Italian, claret and pink.

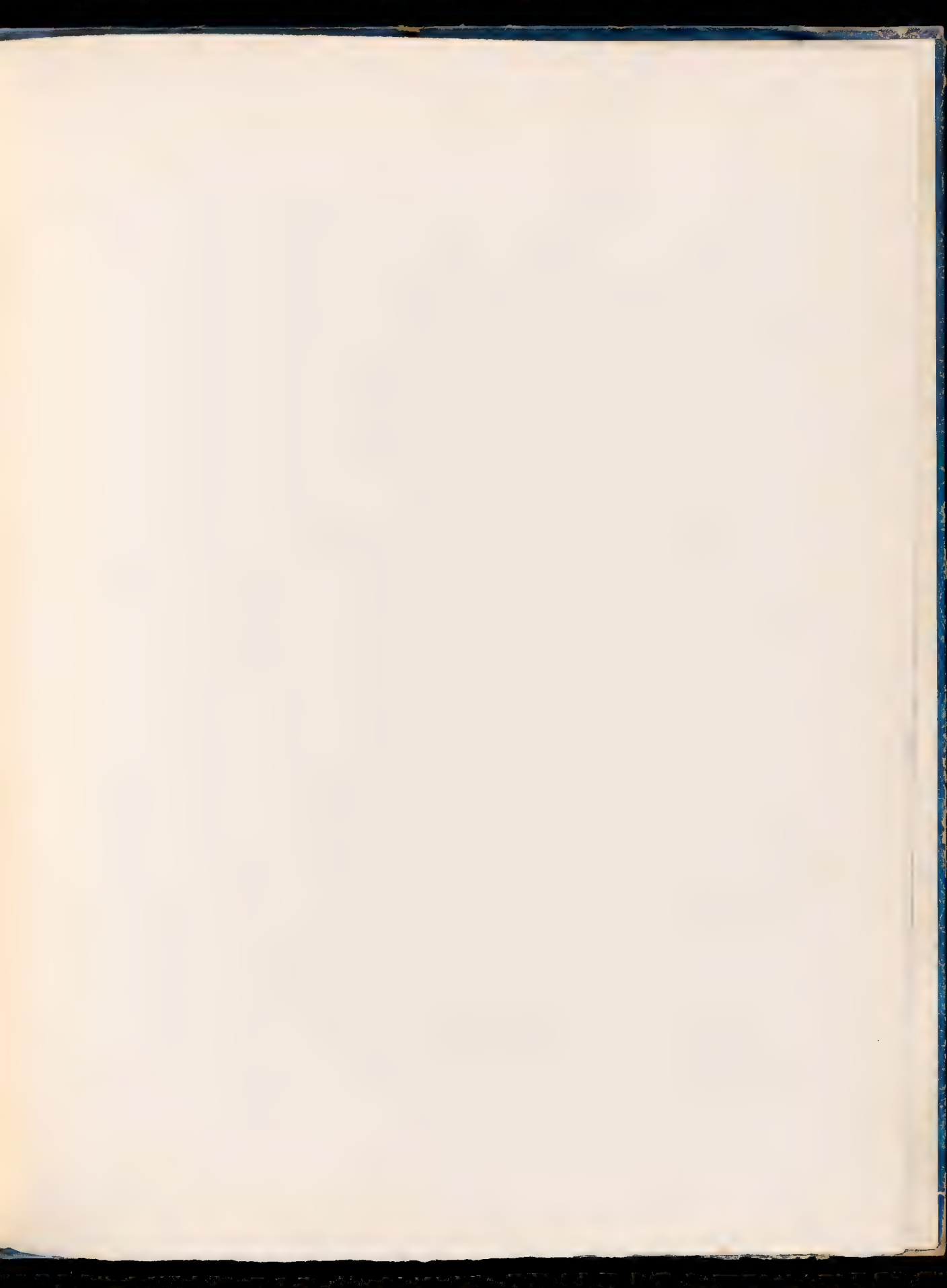
Blue: Dark and light.

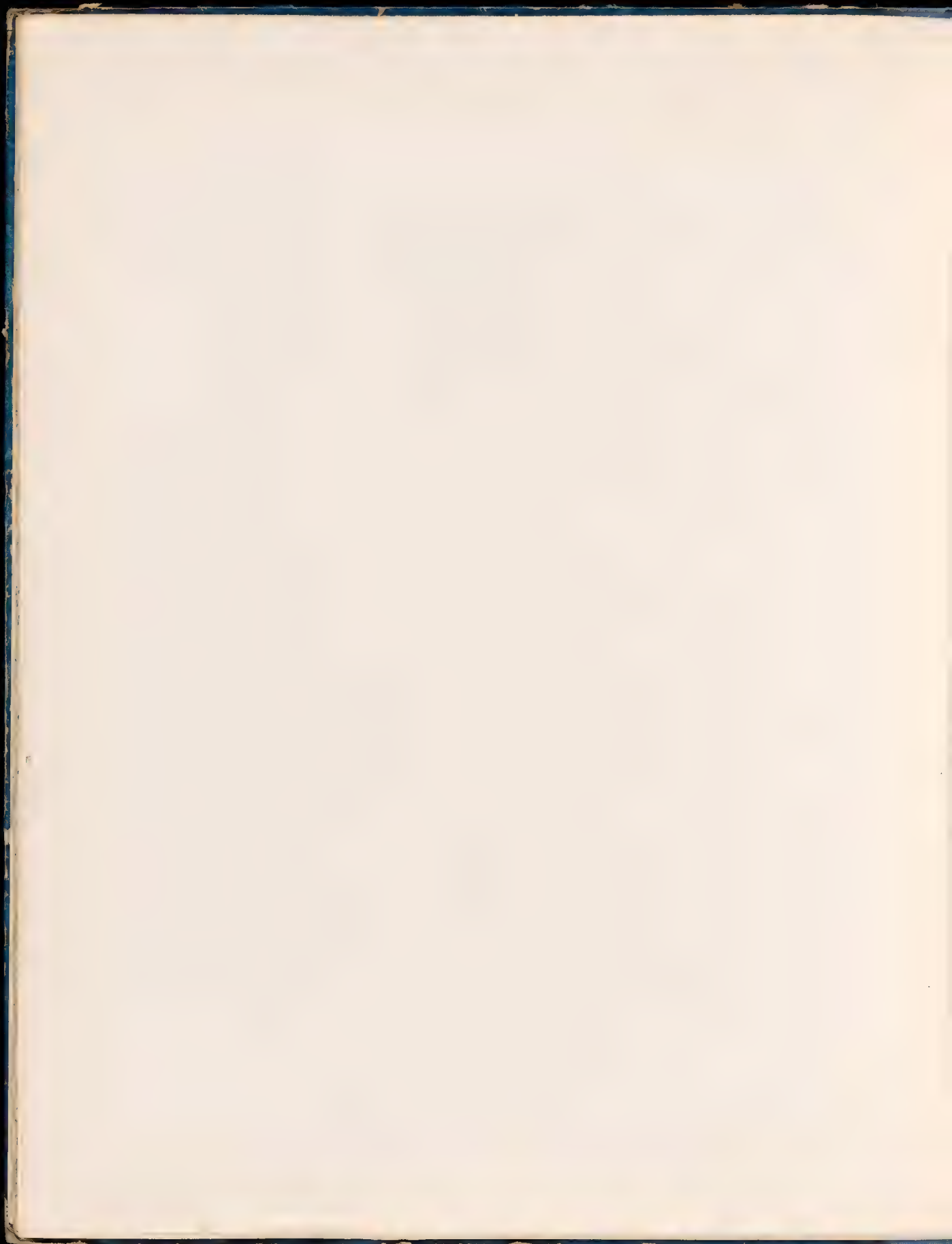
Yellow, brown, russet, tan.

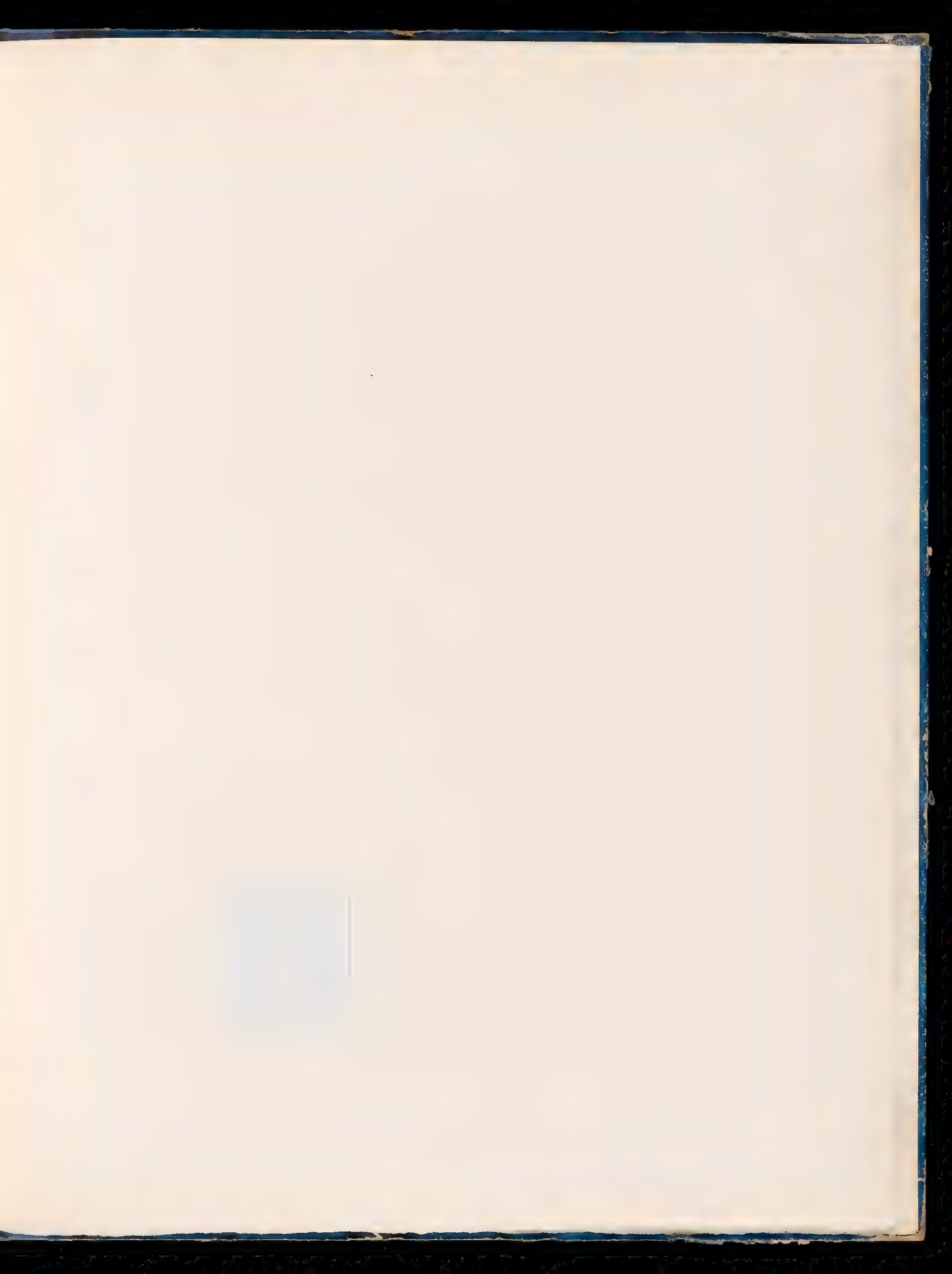
Green, ivory and black.

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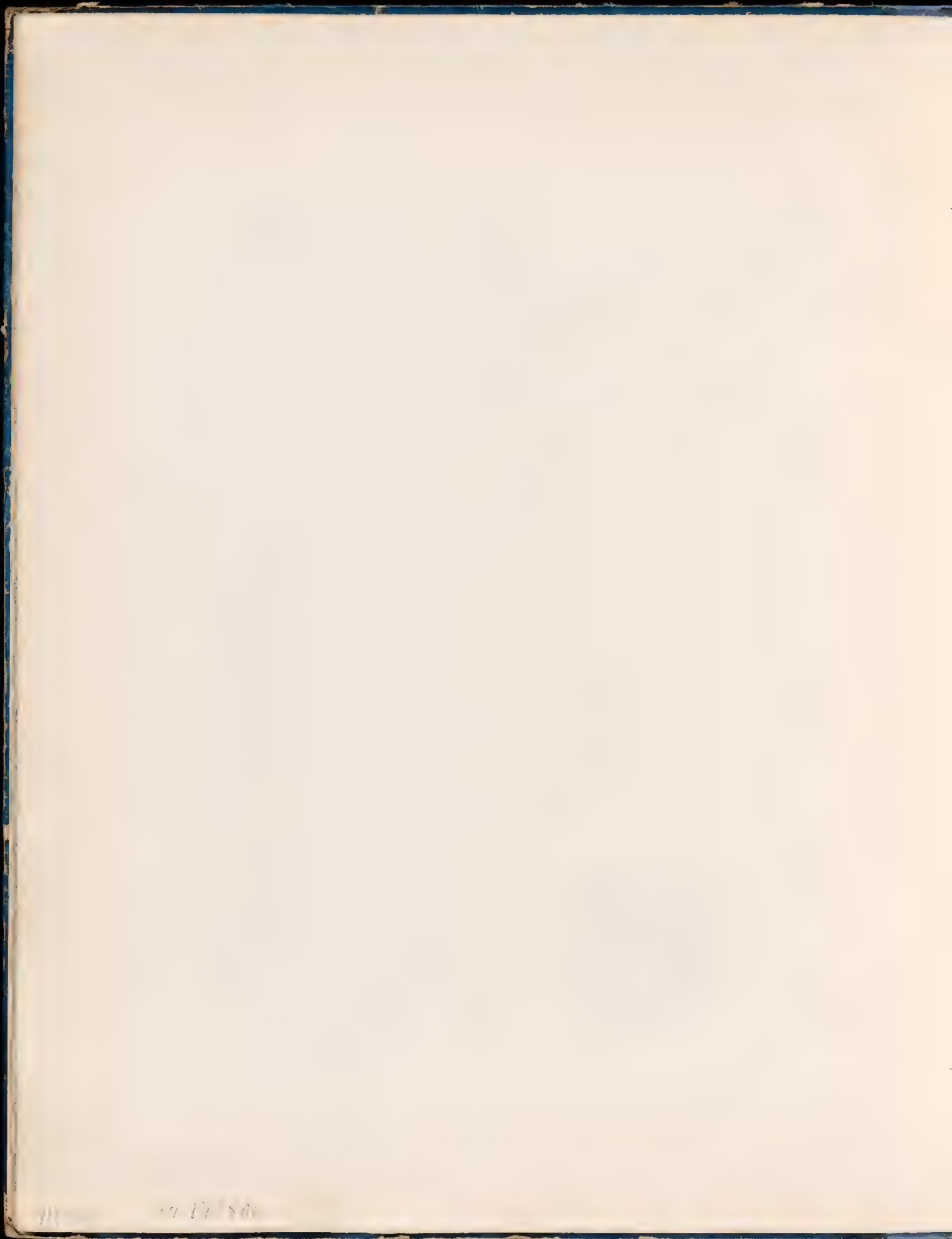










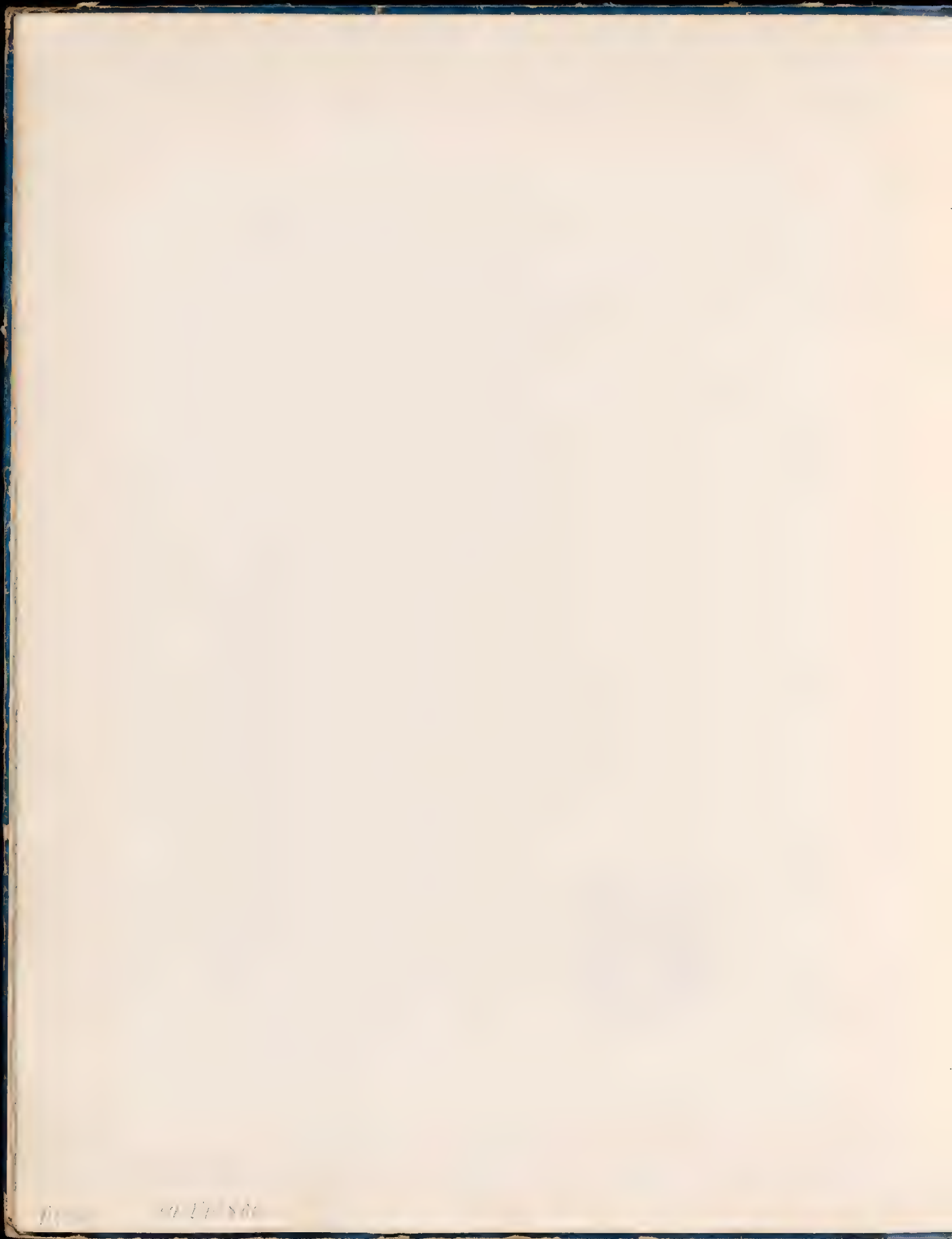


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TREASURY DEPARTMENT

UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE

NEW YORK, N. Y.

January 2, 1925.

Mr. S. H. Topakyan,  
878 Broadway,  
New York, N. Y.

Sir:

Att. Mr. S. H. Topakyan

In my capacity, both official and unofficial,  
I have been afforded an opportunity of scrutinizing some  
of the world's finest Oriental rugs and carpets, - but  
I do not recall, in my many years experience, ever having  
seen any specimens of Oriental rug weavers' art so beautiful  
as the Persian Silk Garden carpet and the Persian Silk Ardebil which  
I had the pleasure of beholding at your premises recently.

It would be quite impossible for me to adequately  
express my appreciation of your kindness in permitting me  
to examine them.

Very truly yours,

*Edward A. Blakeney.*





ESTABLISHED 1882

# H. S. TAVSHANJIAN, INC.

Manufacturers and Importers of

**PERSIAN & CHINESE  
CARPETS & RUGS**

BRANCHES IN  
PERSIA AND CHINA

CODES USED  
LIEBERS  
BENTLEY'S

11 East 26<sup>th</sup> Street.

NEW YORK.

CABLE ADDRESS: TAVSHANJIAN

December 29, 1924.

Messrs. Donchian & Co.,

878 Broadway,

New York City.

Gentlemen:

The silk carpet you are so fortunate to possess is one of the marvels of the Oriental weaving and combining of exquisite colorings. It is a sheer treat to stand hours marveling at its supreme beauty. No description can do it sufficient justice: one has to see it and feel its texture.

*A. H. Ligon*







Telephones: Mkt. 5290 Union  
New York Office, 3153 Lexington

Cable Address: "Costikyan-New York"  
Lieber's Code

New York Office  
Textile Bldg.  
295 Fifth Avenue

## COSTIKYAN CARPET COMPANY

Dec. 22, 1924.

Mr. S. H. Topakyan,  
c/o Messrs. Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

My dear Mr. Topakyan:-

It was a rare pleasure to look at the old Persian silk rugs you showed me recently, especially the Garden Rug with the multitudinous borders that reminded one more of the finest Italian mosaic work. It carried one back to the days - how distant they seem! - when the weaving art of Persia flourished at its best and floor coverings were not merely a few pounds of cotton and wool thrown together only for utilitarian purposes by some weaver working for his daily bread, but rather exemplified the soul of some master-artist overlaid on warp and woof just as the master-painters of Europe reflected on canvas, by means of paint and brush, their own noble conceptions of the beautiful.

To have the opportunity of viewing such a masterpiece of the weaver's art is a refreshing antidote to the commercialized present-day rug and makes one regret it is in the past only that we find the work of weavers whose efforts were the result of joy in their labors, producing such a treasure as your Garden Rug in Silk.

Very truly yours,

*M. N. Costikyan*

THE  
GREAT  
GREAT

1880

1881

1882

1883

1884

1885

1886

1887



IMPERIAL PERSIAN CONSULATE GENERAL

16 EAST 40TH STREET

NEW YORK

U.S.A.

PHONE BRYANT 8170

December 20, 1924.

Messrs. Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

Gentlemen:

It is doubtful if any other single person has been afforded more opportunities than have I to witness the world's finest collections of Oriental carpets.

In my forty (40) years' experience and particularly in my capacity as representative of the Persian Empire, I was not only permitted, but in many instances, invited to pass judgment upon the finest Oriental rugs in existence. However, I do not recall ever having beheld more perfect specimens of the Oriental weaver's art of the period superior to your three (3) Persian silk carpets, - especially the Garden rug, which in size, in texture, harmonious blending of colors, wonderful design, and in the numerous delicate borders, beggars description.

While I have enjoyed the rare privilege of having inspected your wonderful Persian silk garden carpet, I cannot, as a lover of things Oriental, repress a feeling of sadness in that I realize that masterpieces of this character represent a lost art.

Very truly yours,

*H. H. Topatkyan*

Ghavam-ol-Vesareh  
of Persia



ORIENTAL RUG AND TRADING CO.

IMPORTERS  
AND WHOLESALE DEALERS

230 FIFTH AVENUE  
CORNER 27TH STREET

PERSIAN HOUSES:  
SULTANABAD  
KERMAN  
HAMADAN

IN  
ORIENTAL RUGS

CABLE ADDRESS  
"RUGSULTANA"

TELEPHONE MADISON Sq. 6985

NEW YORK,

Dec. 15, 1924

Messrs. Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

Gentlemen:

I have traveled the world over, have lived  
in many countries, and have seen most of  
the world's greatest rugs, but this one is  
the finest of all.

Yours very truly,

Oriental Rug & Trading Co.



WFC:JG







**BRANCHES:**  
CONSTANTINOPLE  
BERLIN KIRMAN  
LONDON ARAK  
TABRIZ KESHAN  
TEHERAN NESHED  
SULTANABAD

## KAZAN-MANNING CARPET CO., INC.

THE PERSIAN WAREHOUSE

DIRECT IMPORTERS OF

### PERSIAN RUGS & CARPETS

WHOLESALE  
1115 BROADWAY  
CORNER OF 25TH STREET

NEW YORK

December 18th, 1924.

CABLE ADDRESS  
"DEREKET"  
LIEBER'S CODE USED  
—  
TELEPHONE  
WATKINS 9370

Messrs. Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

Dear Sirs:-

Attention: Mr. S. H. Topakyan

Though they count their wealth in millions, you, in  
your possession of this wonderful Persian Silk Garden Rug, are  
richer by far than any of these.

Very truly yours,

*arkazan*





*Constantinople, Turkey  
Bagdad, Turkey  
Tiflis, Russian Georgia.*

*Branches:  
Tehran, Persia  
Tabriz, Persia  
Hamadan, Persia*

*Sultanabad, Persia  
Kochan, Persia  
Kerman, Persia*

# *The Fritz and La Rue Co.*

*Mohawk Bldg., 160 Fifth Avenue.*

*Importers of Oriental Rugs,*

*Products of Turkey, Persia, and India.*

*Cable Address "Fritz La Rue"  
Bentley's Code*

*New York.*

Dec. 18, 1924.

Messrs. Donchian & Company,  
878 Broadway,  
N. Y. City.

ATTENTION OF MR. S. H. TOPAKYAN.

My dear Mr. Topakyan:-

I am in receipt of your letter, inquiring as to my opinion of the Persian Silk Garden Carpet which you so kindly showed to me.

I consider this the finest Silk Carpet of its kind that I have ever seen, and I doubt very much whether you could duplicate it, simply because Oriental Rug weaving of this kind is a lost art.

I consider it a great pleasure that you afforded me the opportunity of viewing this wonderful piece.

With kindest personal regards, believe me,

Yours very truly,

CBF/MLC

*Charles Fritz*





CARSON PIRIE SCOTT & Co.  
CHICAGO

NEW YORK OFFICE:  
404 FOURTH AVE.

NEW YORK      Dec. 19, 1924

Mr. S. H. Topakyian,  
c/o Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

Dear Mr. Topakyian:

I want to thank you for having extended to me the opportunity of seeing the three wonderful silk Persian carpets that you have at present in your possession. I have had many opportunities of looking over collections of fine antique Persian rugs, both in this country and abroad, but have never seen anything to equal the three silk carpets in your collection. Two of these carpets are particularly fine, and I believe the Persian Garden carpet with its numerous borders is the most exquisite bit of colorings ever blended in a silk Persian carpet.

My only hope is that the possessor of these three carpets in the future will be kind enough to give them to some national museum so the public at large can have the benefit of enjoying them.

Yours very truly,

WEN:MS





*John P. Kersey*  
**George P. Kersey**  
**RUGS**  
4 East Fifty-third Street  
New York

December 19th, 1924.

Mess. Donchian & Co.,  
878 Broadway,  
New York City.

Attention: Mr. S. H. Topakyan  
Gentlemen:-

I have today seen, with very great pleasure,  
in your place, the finest Antique Silk carpet that I  
have ever seen.

I have been identified with the Oriental Rug  
business in this City for over forty (40) years and have  
probably sold more fine high class rugs than any other  
dealer in this Country; either in a wholesale or retail  
line.

The magnificent Antique Silk carpet shown me  
yesterday is, in my opinion, THE finest Masterpiece and  
Specimen of its period.

Very truly yours,

*John P. Kersey*





George F. Kennedy  
100 West 42nd Street  
New York

December 1940, 1941

Wm. B. Dwyer & Co.,  
100 West 42nd Street,  
New York City.

Attention: Mr. E. N. Dwyer

I have today seen, with great pleasure,  
in your office, the finest American silk carpet that I  
have ever seen.

I have been identified with the American silk  
business in New York City for over twenty years and have  
personally sold more than five million yards of silk  
carpet in this country, either in wholesale or retail  
trade.

The magnificent quality of the carpet shown me  
today is, in my opinion, the finest American silk  
carpet of the kind.

Very truly yours,  
George F. Kennedy

—LETTERS—

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE



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